

Michigan School Readiness Program



Michigan Department of Education
Office of School Excellence

Curriculum, Birth – Grade 12 Early Childhood & Parenting Programs

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June 2001 Update



Attention!!

Staff members in Early Childhood and Parenting Programs have completed the initial review of the MSRP applications for **2000-2001**. Due to a number of technical challenges, districts are beginning to receive copies of the Grant Award Notification including signed, approved budgets for 2000-2001. Please **do not confuse the information** included in this mailing with FY-2001-2002. Instructions and forms for the 2001-2002 State Aid Grant Application for the Michigan School Readiness Program will not be available on the web site until early summer.

THE CHILDREN'S LICENSE PLATE

The "Just Love 'Em" Children's License Plate is available for order at all Michigan Secretary of State offices or their web site at www.sos.state.mi.us. The license plate shows your support for kids with \$25 of the \$35 cost for the plate going back to your local community in support of programs and services that prevent child abuse and neglect. For more information and 100 Things You Can Do To Promote CTF and the Children's License Plate, please contact Children's Trust Fund, Michigan Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, at (517) 373-4320.



Carol Breen announces her retirement effective in July. Carol, who retired in 1998 from a full teaching/administrative career, made significant contributions to the Michigan Department of Education, Early Childhood and Parenting Programs.

As an education consultant, Carol has provided training and support for hundreds of Michigan School Readiness Programs (MSRP) throughout the state, as well as leadership and consultation for multiage programs. Among Carol's many contributions are: trainer of trainers in implementation of the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile, produced and directed the R.E.A.D.Y. video *It Starts With A Book...And You!*, collaborated in the writing of the *MSRP Implementation Manual*, and provided a model to support the implementation of high-quality preschool programs for children and families.

A celebration in Carol's honor is scheduled for June 27, 2001. If you would like to join in the celebration, please contact Connie Robinson at (517) 241-4291 before June 22, 2001.

rites of passage

Spring is an exciting time for families of children leaving preschool as they plan for the transition to kindergarten. The transition may also become a time of concern for some families and educators. The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education have developed a position statement entitled, *STILL Unacceptable Trends in Kindergarten Entry and Placement*. Research indicates that: "extra year kindergarten programs place the child at risk of failure, apathy toward school and demoralization." The Michigan School Code reads: **"Right to attend school; right to enroll in kindergarten. Sec. 1147(2) In a school district where provision is made for kindergarten work, a child, resident of the district, is entitled to enroll in the kindergarten if the child is at least five years of age on December 1 of the school year of enrollment."** (See the document on the Student Issues section of the MDE website:

www.state.mi.us/mde/off/csatsat/index.htm)

"That means kindergarten, not a two-year planned program before first grade," states Reneé De Mars-Johnson, Early Childhood and Parenting Programs Coordinator.

Dr. Samuel J. Meisels, Professor of Education and Associate Dean for Research in the School of Education with the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, has addressed three myths about America's kindergartens. Myth #1: "Raising the school entry age produces smarter kindergarten classes." Myth #2: "If children aren't ready for first grade, we do them a favor by holding them back." Myth #3: "Immature students or slow learners can benefit from two years of kindergarten." Narrative Summaries/Year End Reports and local follow-up evaluations for children who have attended the Michigan School

Readiness Program continue to reveal a percentage of children being "referred" for two years of kindergarten. "Developmental kindergarten" is designed to provide those children who are singled out as "not ready" the "gift of time." School districts/public school academies should revisit the research and findings with regard to this form of retention. As Dr. Meisels points out, "...the very alternatives selected to protect children from an inappropriate curriculum carry within them the seeds of failure, low self-esteem and reduced achievement."



The purpose and goal of Kindergarten Round-up was never to determine whether a child is "ready" for kindergarten. The purpose of developmental screening, a federally funded project known as Child Find, helps districts identify those children who may be in need of referral for Special Education services before they enter kindergarten. Dr. Harriet A. Egertson, Administrator, Office of Children and Families from the Nebraska Department of Education, in her keynote address at the 2001 MiAEYC Kindergarten/Primary Conference, reported that a follow-up study of children who have attended two-year kindergarten, transitional first, or been retained in the primary grades would show that 30 percent of those children are likely to drop out of high school.

RECOMMENDED READING

As districts wrestle with the issues of children being ready for schools and schools being ready for all children, it is important to review what the research is showing. We recommend the following:

1. Part 1, *Ready Schools*, National Education Goals Panel. This can be viewed at their website at <http://www.negp.gov/>
2. *Of Primary Interest* Newsletter, *STILL Unacceptable Trends*, Vol. 7 Numbers 3&4 Summer 2000. This can be viewed at <http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/naecs/>
3. *Of Primary Interest* Newsletter, *Grade Retention: A History of Failure*, Vol. 6 No. 2 Spring 1999. This can be viewed at <http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/naecs/>



MSRP STATE AID ALLOCATION NOTIFICATION

Consultants have completed their reviews of the Comprehensive Community Needs and Resources Assessments (CNRA), the pre-application for the State Aid MSRP. The information is currently being entered into the database. Once entered, the formula will be run to determine allocations.

It is anticipated that the level of state funding (\$72,600,000/\$3,300 per child) will remain the same. State Aid Allocations will be sent to eligible district superintendents after the legislature has recessed. Applications for the 2001-2002 year will be posted on the Department website

www.state.mi.us/mde/off/staa/earlychild/index.htm

in early summer. These will be due 30-45 days later. Technical assistance workshops were provided throughout the state in the spring. A draft of the 2001-2002 MSRP State Aid Application was provided at the workshops. No changes are expected. Districts/public school academies should be planning their 2001-2002 programs.

BE CERTAIN YOU DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION THAT IS LABELED

“STATE AID” NOT “COMPETITIVE”

FACTORS WHICH PLACE CHILDREN 'AT RISK'

The Michigan State Board of Education has approved a recommendation by the Bi-Annual Legislative Review Committee to define one "OTHER" possibility for risk factor number 25. A child may be eligible for services in the MSRP Program with documentation of one risk factor and the informed clinical opinion of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals and parent(s)/primary caregiver(s) that the child has a factor placing him or her at risk of school failure not included in the Children At Risk report. This can only apply to ten percent of the enrolled children. A signed narrative explanation must be present in the child's file when using this risk factor. Additional factors that an MSRP program wants to use for enrollment still require approval by the State Board of Education.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

Budget guidelines are included in the application to assist in completion of the Part I. Budget form which is part of the formal application. Please refer to the Budget Guidelines to determine how funds may or may not be used. The *MSRP Implementation Manual*, Section 11, page 74, also provides information to support demonstration that the project has an appropriate budget and is cost effective. MDE function codes must be used to complete the financial reporting requirements. It is very important to show total proposed expenditures including local or in-kind. The budget detail should include which portion of expenditures are MDE's share and which portion will be covered with local or in-kind services. Please contact your consultant if you have questions as you complete budget reports.

NARRATIVE SUMMARY/YEAR END REPORTS

The 2000-2001 MSRP Narrative Summary Report and Financial Reports have been revised. The forms necessary for end-of-year reporting for the 2000-2001 Michigan School Readiness Program have been posted to the Early Childhood and Parenting Programs' website. You will note that there are changes in the format this year.

State Aid	
<i>Due Dates</i>	<i>Report/Form</i>
August 1, 2001	Narrative Summary Report
November 15, 2001 If carry-over is requested, the Actual Final Expenditures Report must be submitted with the Carry-Over Budget Request Form by October 18, 2001.	Actual Final Expenditures Report
October 18, 2001	Carry-Over Budget Request Form

Competitive Grantees	
<i>Due Dates</i>	<i>Report/Form</i>
August 1, 2001	Narrative Summary Report
November 30, 2001	DS-4044 on-line final expenditure report
November 30, 2001	Budget Detail of Actual Final Expenditures

Additional Narrative Summary forms and report forms are available by accessing our web site.